

Profiles

Cinda Chullen



TIME AT JSC: 17 years
ORGANIZATION: Engineering Directorate
POSITION TITLE: Technical Manager: Science, Engineering, Analysis and Test contract
EDUCATION: Bachelor's of Science, Thermal and Environmental Engineering, Southern Illinois University; MBA, University of Houston – Clear Lake; Master's of Science, Environmental Science, UHCL; Certified Emergency Medical Technician, San Jacinto College
PLACE OF BIRTH: McDowell, Ky.
HOBBIES: Spending time with my husband and two children, teaching my “exercise class” at Gilruth, coordinating family education classes at church, Creative Memories scrapbooking with my daughter and friends, and reading.

WHAT DOES NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH MEAN TO YOU?
To me it means to be strong! Being strong is what Native Americans had to do in light of their adversity. As well, “Be strong” is used as a farewell when departing in Native American culture. I am also reminded to hand down my great-grandmother's Cherokee Indian heritage to my children, just as my parents handed it down to me. I believe being strong is what has kept the Cherokee Nation a noble nation of extraordinary vitality.

FAVORITE WORDS OF WISDOM:
My mother always said, “Get an education! It is the one thing that no one will ever be able to take away from you.” She is now 81 and is the only one of 12 siblings to earn a college degree.

Mary McLain



TIME AT JSC: 22 years
ORGANIZATION: ISD, Information and Imaging Sciences Division
POSITION TITLE: Technical Information Specialist/AFGEs Union President
EDUCATION: High school; life
PLACE OF BIRTH: Washington, D.C.
HOBBIES: Flower gardening, crafts, traveling by auto, helping all animals, playing the slots.

WHAT DOES NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH MEAN TO YOU?
It reaffirms that America recognizes the importance of and need for diversity, as well as the benefits enjoyed from being receptive to all cultural contributions.

FAVORITE WORDS OF WISDOM:
Positive contributions are equally important as status.

J.C. Elliott



TIME AT JSC: 37 years
ORGANIZATION: Space Shuttle Program Office
POSITION TITLE: Aerospace Technologist
EDUCATION: Physics
PLACE OF BIRTH: Oklahoma
HOBBIES: Music

WHAT DOES NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH MEAN TO YOU?
It's an observance that the American Indian has contributed much to the richness and greatness of this country, and continues to do so, and that we are survivors – we are still here!

FAVORITE WORDS OF WISDOM:
It's always best to be flexible. That way, you can never get bent out of shape.



John Herrington

Did you know?

Endeavour will carry STS-113 Mission Specialist John Herrington. He is the first Native American with an active tribal affiliation to fly in space.

Herrington was born in Oklahoma and grew up in Colorado, Wyoming and Texas – always surrounded by airplanes, since his father was a pilot. He said he dreamed of flying in space as a child but “never thought it was something I could actually achieve.”

After earning his bachelor's and master's degrees, Herrington became a test pilot for the Navy and was selected as an astronaut in 1996. He said he hopes that his success can inspire others to pursue what they want in life.

“If my heritage as a Chickasaw Indian and the fact of what I do here will help motivate somebody who might not otherwise think they could achieve their dreams,” he said, “that's a good thing. It's an honor to be in that position.”

NATIVE
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